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southern California; but since the statement came in answer to direct inquiry and no further details were forthcoming, its truth cannot be accepted without further evidence." None of the other investigators among the Washo has found evidence of an annual mourning ceremony. Our informants did not report it.

Birth Ceremonies

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Women were active during pregnancy and there were no special observances before birth. When the baby was born, it was bathed, wrapped with its arms at its sides, and placed in a winnowing basket (modall). Bertha Holbrook says that the baby was not bathed again until the umbilical cord fell off.

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Stewart (1941, 408) says the baby was bathed about every five days and placed in a new basket after each bath. The afterbirth was arranged with the umbilical cord inside and buried upright. Stewart (1941, 408) says the afterbirth was wrapped in bark before burial. The Washo believed that if the afterbirth was buried upside down the woman would have no more children. The baby's umbilical cord was kept moistened and was wrapped with ground pinesnut bark. When it fell off it was tied to a stick and this in turn was tied to the right side of the winnowing basket. The Washo believed that this would make the baby right-handed.

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The husband went to a stream and bathed after the birth. He left a present beside the stream which anyone could come and take. Lewis (1939, 305) reports that after the birth the husband gave some man a buckskin, which helped to keep disease away from the infant. Until the cord fell off, the husband took a cold bath every morning; was not supposed to sleep at night; ate no meat, salt or grease; did not gamble or smoke (Stewart, 1941, 409); and was constantly working. The husband's incessant activity was to make the child industrious in later life. When the cord fell off, the mother announced it. Then the husband went hunting, killed some animal, and distributed it in his household. On this day any nonrelative could come and help himself to the property of the husband. After the cord had fallen off, the husband returned to normal life and could again eat meat, salt and grease.

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For a month after the birth, the mother did not bathe; ate no meat, grease, or salt; drank only warm water; used a scratching stick (Stewart, 1941, 408); and she and her husband had no sexual intercourse. Stewart (1941, 409) says the couple was continent for from six to 12 months. For two weeks the mother lay tightly covered upon a warm bed. The bed was made by digging a shallow ditch, putting hot sand and ashes in it, and covering it with grass. She did not leave the house during this time, even to relieve herself. The Washo believed that the woman had to be cured inside after a birth and that the hot bed and food taboos aided in draining out the bad blood.

A month after the birth the ceremony the Washo call in English the "baby feast" was held. In Washo the ceremony is called gungáwi? or gungá?au and means haircut. The mother bathed herself and the baby and both had their hair cut. Hank Pete says that another woman bathed the mother by washing her with sagebrush leaves dipped in water. The woman stroked the mother from her head down the front of her body to her toes and from the top of her head across her shoulders and down her arms. The hair cut from the baby's head was wrapped in buckskin and tied to the hood of his first cradle basket. Until the haircut the baby was kept in a winnowing basket, but afterwards he was kept on a series of cradle baskets. Next, a female relative of the mother took a winnowing basket (modal) and placed in it small handfuls of all kinds of food. A bow and arrow or an eagle feather or anything else could be placed on the basket with the food. The mother took a bit of each food, chewed it with sagebrush and spit it out. Then, the contents of the basket were given away, chiefly to old people. After this ceremony the mother could again eat meat, grease and salt, and the husband and wife could have sexual intercourse.

According to our informants, the modern Washo observe a birth ceremony although many of the customs surrounding birth have been abandoned. The men especially seem to have given up their traditional practices; as a result, the ceremony when the umbilical cord falls off is no longer observed. The women still observe the food taboos, unless they have been forced to eat meat at the government hospital. If the food restrictions have been followed, the women undergo the ceremony of chewing food with sagebrush and spitting it out at the end of the period of restriction. Bathing, hair cutting and the distribution of presents have also been retained. The latter practice seems more important in the modern ceremony than it was in the aboriginal one. The modern baby feast follows the birth by two weeks rather than a month.

Girl's Puberty Dance

The girl's puberty dance (íe?wé we?) was celebrated at her first menstruation. From the time a girl first menstruated, she did not eat for four days although she might take warm water or tea made from boiling sagebrush or sugar pine leaves in water. The fast made her live longer and kept her from getting hungry later in life; if she ate she would not grow properly and would die young (Lowie, 1939, 308). During the four days of her fast, said the Washo, the girl was "shaping her life." She should work hard so as not to be lazy in the future. The girl tried to stay awake at night, kept busy with household tasks, and gathered berries and nuts. Anyone could take what she had gathered. Stewart (1941, 410) says she used a scratching stick for a month

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were active workers of malevolence; witches were hapless victims of a condition arising naturally from their age. However, this situation was obscured by the fact that older people were thought to be likely candidates for acquiring wegel'yu. Older people, therefore, were open to charges of sorcery; although innocent, an old person might be on the defensive knowing that he could inadvertently bewitch someone, especially a child or a young person. The belief that older people are more likely to acquire wegel'yu than younger ones is not supported by the testimony of our informants regarding the ages at which known shamans acquired power. Hank Pete's mother acquired her power before marriage, probably before the age of 15; Rupert acquired his as a young man.

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Social control among relatives was based on a fear of ghosts rather than sorcery. Relatives who could not be influenced in any other way could be reached by an attempted suicide. The reason is clear: the dead person could become a ghost; hence he would be in a position to threaten the life of his living relatives. The usual method for an attempted suicide was to eat wild parsnip. The poison acts slowly and gives plenty of time to save the victim. The Washo force an emetic down the person's throat and he vomits up the poison.

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The four examples of attempted suicide recounted by our informants were definite attempts at resolving family problems. In one case, a man had been having difficulty with his wife; she was interested in another man. The husband ate wild parsnip, but was saved. As a result his sons brought pressure on the wife and made her behave. The couple stayed together until the husband died. A second case involved trouble between a brother and sister. The sister had been taking money from the parents, and the brother objected. The girl threatened suicide and the boy said, "Go ahead -- I don't care." The girl took wild parsnip, but not enough to kill her, and she was saved. The parents were very happy to have her revived. After this episode, the son left home. In the third case a man never wanted to work, and his mother and sister didn't like it. He attempted suicide by hanging, but the rope was too long and his feet touched the floor. A relative cut him down. The suicide attempt frightened his mother and sister and they stopped complaining. The fourth case concerned a woman. Our informant didn't know the reason for her attempt to kill herself, but commented, "It's always family trouble."

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Our informants described four cases of successful suicide. Of these, three had no connection with social control. One was that of a helpless old man who lived alone and had no relatives. On a return trip from California where the Washo had been gathering acorns, he asked to be abandoned. Another successful suicide was a woman who had lost a daughter whom she loved very much. She ate wild parsnip and died in three hours. The third case, which is probably apocryphal, concerns a shaman who tried unsuccessfully to